

Message Text

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43

ACTION L-02

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-06 ISO-00 AID-05 CEQ-01 CIAE-00

COA-01 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-07 EPA-01 INR-07 IO-10

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FEAE-00 DOTE-00 FMC-01 CG-00 DLOS-03 /087 W

----- 107252

R 210933Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6217

INFO AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMCONSUL MEDAN

AMCONSUL SURABAYA

CINCPAC

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PLOS PFOR SENV ID

SUBJ: GOI STATEMENT ON SHOWA MARU ACCIDENT CALLS FOR REGULATIONS
ON STRAITS SHIPPING

REF: A) JAKARTA 756 B) SINGAPORE 252 C) SINGAPORE 253

SUMMARY: FONDEP ISSUED EIGHT POINT STATEMENT JANUARY 18
AS RESULT OF SHOWA MARU INCIDENT URGING COASTAL STATE
NAVIGATIONAL SAFETY REGULATIONS IN MALACCA AND SINGAPORE
STRAITS AND INVITING OTHER LITTORAL STATES TO ADOPT SUCH
REGULATIONS, ON EITHER A "TRIPARTITE OR, IF NECESSARY,
BILATERAL" BASIS. TIMING AND TONE OF STATEMENT, WHICH
SEEMS TO BE DIRECT CHALLENGE TO SINGAPORE TO ACCEPT
TRIPARTITE REGULATION, ARE SURPRISING, IN VIEW OF
LEE KUAN YEW'S AGREEMENT TO MINISTERIAL MEETINGS ON
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STRAITS. IN ANY CASE, SINGAPORE IS UNLIKELY TO ALTER ITS

POSITION AGAINST UNILATERAL ACTION ON STRAITS; AND WE DOUBT INDONESIAN AND MALAYSIA WOULD SERIOUSLY CONTEMPLATE REGULATOR ACTION WITHOUT SINGAPORE. END SUMMARY.

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1. GROUNDING OF SHOWA MARU IN STRAITS JANUARY 6 CAUSED SERIOUS POLLUTION OF SEA AND ECOLOGICAL DAMAGE.

2. SINCE 1971, INDONESIA, MALAYSIA AND SINGAPORE HAVE SOUGHT TO REGULATE NAVIGATIONAL SAFETY IN STRAITS, WHICH ARE "TERRITORIAL WATERS OF THREE STATES;" FOR VARIOUS REASONS, REGULATIONS, WHICH WOULD INCLUDE TONNAGE AND TRAFFIC LIMITATIONS, HAVE NOT YET BEEN REALIZED.

3. LIMITATIONS TO ENSURE SAFE NAVIGATION AND PROTECT THE SEA ENVIRONMENT ARE IMPORTANT TO PEOPLE IN COASTAL STATES WHO ARE DEPENDENT ON SEA FOR THEIR LIVELIHOOD.

4. MALACCA AND SINGAPORE STRAITS ARE NARROW AND SHALLOW; AVERAGE DEPTH IS 23 METERS; DEPTH AT SOME POINTS IS LESS THAN 20 METERS, AND CURRENTS ARE SWIFT; TRAFFIC IS HEAVY; AS MANY AS 150 SHIPS TRANSIT STRAITS DAILY.

5. VERY LARGE CRUDE CARRIERS CANNOT BE STEERED SAFELY, CORRECT NAVIGATIONAL ERRORS, OR STOP WITHOUT VAST SPACE.

6. SHOWA MARU GROUNDING PROVED THAT NAVIGATIONAL ERROR BY A LARGE TANKER PRESENTS GREAT RISK OF A DISASTER, WITH FAR REACHING EFFECTS ON SEA ENVIRONMENT, THE EVENT PROVES CORRECTNESS OF INDONESIA'S POSITION THAT TANKERS OF MORE THAN 200,000 TONS SHOULD TAKE ANOTHER, SAFER ROUTE.

7. INDONESIA SUPPORTS RAPID INTERNATIONAL NAVIGATION, BUT NOT AT EXPENSE OF LITTORAL STATES. IN AN AGE OF GIANT TANKERS, A REASONABLE BALANCE MUST BE REACHED BETWEEN INTERESTS OF UNHINDERED NAVIGATION, SAFETY OF ENVIRONMENT, AND PEOPLES OF LITTORAL STATES.

8. THIS HARMFUL EXPERIENCE "HAS COMPELLED INDONESIA TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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INVITE, IN GOOD FAITH, THE OTHER LITTORAL STATES, EITHER ON A TRIPARTITE OR IF NECESSARY BILATERAL BASIS TO PROMPTLY REGULATE THE SAFETY OF THE STRAITS...."

END UNCLASSIFIED

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9. COMMENT: STATEMENT IS ANOTHER ATTEMPT TO EXPLOIT MOMENTUM OF SHOWA MARU ACCIDENT IN ORDER TO STRESS NEED FOR CONTROLS OVER STRAITS AND PERSUADE SINGAPORE TO ALTER ITS POSITION AND ACCEPT JOINT COASTAL STATE REGULATION. STIFF FINAL PARAGRAPH OF STATEMENT CALLING FOR "TRIPARTITE, OR IF NECESSARY BILATERAL" REGULATION IS APPARENTLY A WARNING TO SINGAPORE TO JOIN INDONESIA AND MALAYSIA IN REGULATORY SCHEME OR ACCEPT REGULATION BY INDONESIA AND MALAYSIA. THIS IS SURPRISING TACTIC, ESPECIALLY AFTER LEE KUAN YEW HAS AGREED TO MINISTERIAL MEETINGS ON STRAITS AND APPARENTLY ADOPTED MORE FORTHCOMING POSITION ON CONSULTATIONS (REF B, C). IT SEEMS MORE LIKELY TO OFFEND SINGAPOREANS THAN ATTRACT THEIR COOPERATION. IN ANY CASE, WE REGARD GOI STATEMENT AS MAINLY HORTATORY, AND AS STATED REF A, DOUBT INDONESIA AND MALAYSIA WOULD ATTEMPT ACTION WITHOUT SINGAPORE'S AGREEMENT. AS SINGAPORE'S REF B POINTS OUT, GOS HAS CONFIRMED IT WILL NOT ACCEPT REGULATIONS OVER STRAITS WITHOUT FIRST CONSULTING INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY.

NEWSOM

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